

Oct. 28 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1996

to you that except for the Native Americans, we all come from someplace else, and we need to respect each other.

So I say to you, that future out there in the 21st century will be the greatest age of human possibility we have ever known. More of our children will have a chance to live out their dreams than any time in history if we make the right decisions. The decision we make a week from tomorrow will have a profound impact on how we go into that new century, on whether we say, "We're going forward together" or whether we say, "You're on your own;" on whether we say, "I hope you can make it, but we're too busy to help," or whether we say, "We do think it takes a village to raise our

children and build our future, and we're going to do it."

And so I say to you, probably no person in history who was not a child of Illinois has ever loved this State more or owed more to it than I do. But I ask you one last time, one week from tomorrow, let's build that bridge to the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:15 p.m. in Daley Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; Clem Balanoff, Danny K. Davis, and Rod R. Blagojevich, candidates for Illinois' 11th, 7th, and 5th Congressional Districts, respectively; and Mayor Joseph Kernan of South Bend, IN.

Remarks at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio October 29, 1996

The President. Thank you very much, Jennie Nelson. Your fellow student did a good job, didn't she, up here in front of this big crowd. Give her a hand. Thank you. [Applause] Thank you, Senator John Glenn. Thank you, Senator Ben Espy. Thank you, Ted Strickland, for having the courage to run for the Congress again. Your courage should be rewarded, and I hope it will be, by the people of Ohio.

We have a number of other people here with me today, including our National Treasurer and your former State treasurer from Ohio, Mary Ellen Withrow. Thank you, Mary Ellen. And we have another candidate for Congress here today who is opposing the architect of the Gingrich-Dole budget that shut the Government down and would have divided the country. Thank you, Cynthia Ruccia, for having the courage to take on that race for Congress.

I thank Representative Charlita Tavares for being here; our State Democratic chair, David Leland; State senate candidate Mary Jo Kilroy; Bill Burga, the president of the AFL-CIO; Mike Bilirakis, the president of the Ohio Education Association; Tom Mooney of the Ohio Federation of Teachers. Tony Celebreeze, thank you for being here.

And thank you, Ohio State. Thank you, band and cheerleaders, for being here. Thank you

all up there; thank you. On the way in today, your student leaders gave me an Ohio State pin, your fine basketball coach gave me a jogging suit for the winter that I can run in, and I needed no reminding that your football team is having another wonderful season. Congratulations.

Ladies and gentlemen, it seems almost amazing to me that it was 4 years ago that I came here to Ohio State, and we had a great rally outside, thousands of people, a lot of enthusiasm. I think I stood around for more than an hour to shake hands, talking to you about my hopes for the future.

Now, 4 years later, you are about to go to the polls just a week from today to elect the last President of the 20th century and the first President of the 21st century. Four years ago when I came here, I came because I was worried about how you would go into the 21st century and because I had a vision for what America ought to be like at the dawn of that new era: a country with the American dream alive and well for everyone willing to work for it; a country still leading the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity; a country where we are coming together in the midst of all of our diversity, not being driven apart and divided as so many other countries in the world are.

I believe we are closer to that vision today than we were 4 years ago, and I ask you to stay on the right track to build our bridge to the 21st century.

Our strategy of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, an American community in which everyone has a place at the table and a role to play, is paying off. You heard Senator Glenn say we have 10½ million new jobs; unemployment in Ohio has dropped a third to 4.6 percent. We've cut the deficit by 63 percent. We got the lowest combined rates of unemployment, inflation, and home mortgages in 28 years. We have the biggest drop in child poverty in 20 years. We have the highest rate of homeownership in 15 years. Household income is up \$1,600. We have now dropping crime rates and dropping welfare rolls for 4 years in a row. We are moving in the right direction toward the 21st century, and I ask you to stay on that track.

We are also breaking the barriers that will unleash a future that we can only imagine and sometimes not even imagine. Many of you students in this audience will soon be doing jobs that have not been invented yet. Some of you will soon be doing jobs that have not been imagined yet.

Here at Ohio State and Ohio Tech and biotech centers and firms all across America, new discoveries are being made at breathtaking speed. The United States Government just signed a contract with IBM to produce a supercomputer—

Audience members. Dole-Kemp! Dole-Kemp! Dole-Kemp!

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Wait. Hey, wait a minute. Just listen to it. Wait, wait. Wait a minute; wait a minute. Just listen to them. Wait a minute. Why are they screaming like that? We heard you. Now, how about the first amendment? We heard your message; now you listen to ours. This is a university. This is a university, and we have respected their free speech. They won't respect ours because they hate the truth. We're better off, and we had to run over them to do it.

Now—they must not have any student loans; Senator Dole voted against creating the student loan program. Ohio State adopted our direct loan program. They must not be in the direct loan program, which gives you the right to pay your loan back as a percentage of your income,

because Senator Dole led the fight against the direct loan program. And they must believe we should start the 21st century as the only great nation in the world with no one in the President's Cabinet to represent education, because that is part of the Dole-Kemp program for the 21st century: Get rid of the Department of Education.

I welcome anyone to these rallies, and I welcome you to theirs. I hope you will never go to theirs and stop them from speaking. I believe in free speech at every university in America.

Now, where was I? We just signed a contract with IBM in which the United States and IBM will produce a supercomputer that will do more calculations in a second than you can do at home tonight on your hand-held calculator in 30,000 years. Recently, scientists were able to have movement in laboratory animals whose spines have been completely severed because of nerve transplants to the spine from other parts of the body.

The human genome project has now mapped out 40 percent of the genetic structure of the body, including discovering in the last 4 years two genes which cause breast cancer. We have more than doubled the life expectancy of people with HIV and AIDS in only 4 years, which opens the prospects that it will become a chronic disease. Now all these things are happening—

Audience members. Dole-Kemp! Dole-Kemp! Dole-Kemp!

The President. —and therefore what we ought to be focusing on today is how we can build a future together that will be worthy of all of our people.

I tell you what I'll do, I'll bet you they won't be doing that a week from today. Everybody who believes in the first amendment, cheer.

Audience members. Yea!

The President. Thank you. Now, let's go on.

You know, we heard a lot of talk from the other side about fiscal responsibility. And you heard Senator Glenn say that the deficit has gone down in all 4 years of this administration for the first time, he said, since President Truman. Actually, President Truman had to raise the deficit one year because of the war in Korea. This is the first time in the 20th century in all 4 years of a President's administration the deficit has gone down. And that's a good thing for America. It means lower interest rates, lower credit card rates, car payment rates, home mort-

gage payments. It's moving us in the right direction.

We're moving from a welfare system based on dependence to one based on independence. The welfare rolls are nearly 2 million smaller than they were 4 years ago—inconvenient for those who would shout down speakers, but it is—2 million. Now, this welfare reform bill gives us a chance to move people forever from welfare to work. But we still have to create jobs. If you're going to tell people you've got to go to work if you're able-bodied, there has to be work there for them to go to. So we have a plan for that.

We're making our families, our neighborhoods safer. We're putting 100,000 police on the street, taking drugs and guns and gangs off the street. The Brady bill has kept 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting handguns, but no Ohio hunter has lost his weapon, not a single one.

We have helped to strengthen families by passing the family and medical leave law. I tell all of you students here who have not started your families yet, one of the biggest challenges facing parents—I hear it everywhere I go—is how to balance the demands of work and the demands of parenting. Everywhere I go people talk about it. The family and medical leave law has allowed 12 million families to take some time off from work without losing their jobs. Senator Dole led the fight against the family leave law. That's why they're screaming now, and they're wrong, and they won't be screaming.

So you tell me, do you agree with the screamers who were against family and medical leave, or do you think America is better off that you can take a little time off when your baby is born or someone in your family has been sick? Do you agree? [Applause] And would you like to see the family leave law extended so that you can take some time off to see parents go to the teacher conferences at the school or to medical appointments with their family members? These are the things we have to do.

But there is no choice before you that is more profoundly significant than the choice involving education. Today I brought with me the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, who served with me as a Governor and I believe is the finest Secretary of Education ever to serve the United States. I'd like for him to stand up and be recognized. [Applause] We have worked—for 20 years we have worked, first as Governors

then, now here in the National Government, to try to advance the cause of education. Now you have to decide whether you believe there are things we should do together or whether we should just say, "You're on your own."

When Ted Strickland said his opponent had said to the school people in his district, "You're entitled to only so much education as you can afford," I think we ought to compliment his opponent for his candor and his honesty because that is what they believe. But I don't believe that; I believe everybody should have a chance to have as much education as is necessary to develop their God-given capacity. And you have to decide. You have to decide. You have to decide.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. You know—remember what John Glenn said? I want a country in which every 8-year-old can read, in which every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, in which every 18-year-old can go to college. I would be screaming, too, if I wanted a country that took Head Start and Big Bird away from 5-year-olds, school lunches away from 10-year-olds, summer jobs away from 15-year-olds, and college loans away from 20-year-olds. I might be screaming, too. We are not afraid of honest discussion and debate, so we don't have to shout our opponents down. But I might be screaming if I had that kind of record—either that or running and looking for a rock to hide behind.

We're having a good time here today, but this is serious business. Our ability to give every young person in this country the capacity to live up to his or her God-given abilities, without regard to their race, their income, their region, where they start out in life, is central to their ability, all of your abilities to build strong families, strong careers, and strong communities and central to America's ability to maintain its world leadership, not only in economic but in military and political terms, in the 21st century.

I'd like to talk to you just for a minute—you know what we have done—I want to talk about what we are going to do. First of all, we know that we have the best system of higher education in the world. We know that our schools are doing a great job with a lot of our students, but we also know that compared to many other countries, too many of our students are getting too far in schools without knowing what they need to know to compete and win

in the global economy of the 21st century. So here's what I think should be done in the future and what I will work for.

Number one, as we have been trying to do for years, the States of this country must set high national standards based on international standards of excellence for students, for teachers, and for schools. The only way to get excellence in education for everyone is to define it, to expect it, to demand it, and then to measure it. I believe all children can learn. But we have to have high expectations, and people need to understand that 90 percent of what we need to know is not a function of IQ, it is a function of sustained effort, and we have to have it measured against high standards.

That's why I believe that students should pass to move from one level in school to another, and a diploma ought to mean something, and we ought to know that, we ought to measure it. But these standardized tests shouldn't be just measuring your test-taking ability; everybody should know on the front end what it is you need to know to meet world-class standards, and that is what should be tested. So you can have a lot of tests that don't mean anything. If we're going to have the tests, they must be tied to what is defined as an excellent education. That is what I favor, and everybody in every State is entitled to it.

Number two, we should continue to support grassroots reforms, as Secretary Riley has, to give parents and teachers and principals and students the capacity to achieve their highest level in every school in America. Every parent should have the freedom to choose their child's public school. Our balanced budget plan contains funds to create 3,000 new schools, charter schools, schools that are free to innovate, to demand high standards, schools that survive only if they produce results. The States already have money to begin that, and I urge them to do it.

But before parents can exercise the right sort of choice, they have to have enough information. So today again let me say, I challenge the States and the school districts of America to publish report cards on every school and to put them on the Internet. Parents should be able to compare class size, reading scores, safety records with all the schools in their district, all the schools in their State, and with schools across the country. We need to know how our schools are doing, and the schools should have a report

card accessible to every parent in the United States, in every State and every community.

Number three, we should do, as Ted Strickland says—in our balanced budget plan we have a plan that will lower the interest rates on borrowing for school districts that are desperate to build cafeterias, new facilities, remodel facilities. There are almost 52 million children in school this year. This is the first year when there have been more children in our school systems across America than were there during the baby boom years—the first year. I have been to school after school after school where people are running out of the classrooms, where the conditions are broken down and the schools don't have the money to fix them, where beautiful old buildings are surrounded by trailers taking up the extra students. We have to do this together now.

Number four, we ought to work hard to make our schools, all our schools, places of values and learning, not violence. We have supported zero tolerance for guns in schools. We have encouraged schools to adopt school uniform policies. We have helped communities to enforce truancy laws and curfews. We fought hard to protect the safe and drug-free schools program from slashing cuts, because all of our children, early in life, need to see one of those D.A.R.E. officers or other role models up in their classrooms saying, "These drugs can kill you. They're not just illegal. They're wrong. They can kill you." We need to do that, and we should support it.

I have also challenged all of our schools to a broad national goal: Every child in America should be able to read independently by the third grade. Forty percent of our children still cannot do that. I want to send 30,000 reading specialists and national service corps, AmeriCorps volunteers around the country to form an army of one million people to make sure that by the year 2000 all of our third graders can read independently.

In the budget I signed last month, we increased the number of work-study jobs for college students by a third, by 200,000—that many more work-study slots. Now, I want to ask you something. I have recommended that at least 100,000 of those new work-study slots be allocated to young people who are willing to work to teach children to read. Would you help do that? Will you support that goal? Will you help us? [Applause] Think what it would mean for

America if every 8-year-old in this country could hold up a book and say, "I can read this all by myself." We can do that.

The next thing we have to do is to hook up every classroom and library in America to the Internet by the year 2000. You know, 4 years ago nobody but nuclear physicists had ever heard of the Internet. Today even my cat, Socks, has his own web page. [Laughter] I'm amazed at that. I meet kids all the time, been talking to my cat on the Internet. [Laughter] It's an amazing thing. By the time a child born today is old enough to read, there will be 100 million people on the Internet. We must connect all of our classrooms and libraries to that information superhighway by the year 2000. Here in Ohio and 18 other States this past weekend, a NetDay was held in which business people, computer technicians, students, parents, teachers all worked to hook up their schools.

Now, let me tell you what this means. I have asked the Federal Communications Commission to authorize an E-rate, a rate that would say, all the schools and libraries in America will be able to hook up to the Internet for free. We've committed—actually, the Internet is even getting overload now, so we've committed another \$100 million to creating a new, expanded, upgraded, next-generation Internet to handle all of you who want to get on it.

Now, if you're not a computer wizard, like me, let me explain in plain language what it means. If we can hook up all of our classrooms to the information superhighway, to the Internet, to the World Wide Web, what it means is, in those school districts Ted Strickland was talking about in southern Ohio, in the poorest inner-city school districts in America, in the most remote school districts in the far reaches of the high plains in America, for the first time ever they and the schools in all the richest districts and the middle class districts, for the first time ever, will have access to the same information in the same way at the same time. It will revolutionize educational opportunity in America, and we owe it to our children to do just that. And I hope you will support it.

And finally, I want you to help me in this election and afterward to open the doors of college education to all Americans. Everybody who wants to go who is willing to work should be able to go.

We have improved the student loan program. This direct loan program that Ohio State partici-

pates in has saved the average college student \$200 and lots of time. But most important of all, it says you can pay your college loan back as a percentage of your income. So no student ever now needs to fear borrowing money to go to college for fear they'll go broke paying the loans off, because you can pay it back as a percentage of your income. It is a very important thing. Secondly, we've signed the biggest increase in Pell grants last month in 20 years. We did add 200,000 people to work-study. We've got almost 70,000 young people who have now earned money for college through AmeriCorps. But I want to do three more things and ask you to help me.

Number one, not everybody in America is or can go to a place like Ohio State, but almost every American of any age who needs further education is within driving distance of a good community college. I want to make 2 years of education after high school as universal as a high school diploma is today, and we can do it. We can do it by simply saying you can deduct the cost of your tuition, dollar for dollar, from your tax bill, a HOPE scholarship in the form of a \$1,500 tax credit. That will revolutionize education.

Number two, we should give every family a deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of college tuition at any place of higher education, undergraduate or graduate, in the United States of America.

And number three, we should expand IRA's so that families can save in these individual retirement accounts and then withdraw from them without any tax penalty if the money is used to pay for college or buying a first-time home or dealing with a family medical cost. These things will allow us to say that middle income families will never, never be taxed on the money they save and spend for college. It will revolutionize the capacity of people to finance a college education in America.

Now, again I say I want you to think about what our country should look like in the 21st century. What is your vision for America then? What is your vision for America when your children are your age? That is what this whole thing is about. So as you go to the polls and as you debate this with your friends and neighbors over the next week and as you encourage a vigorous exchange, think about this, and think about this last point.

Look around this hall today. Look around this hall today. We have people of all kinds of different political views—[laughter]—and genders and ethnic backgrounds and religions and races. There is no place in America anymore where you can't find some measure of diversity.

I was in Detroit the other day, and I was told that in Wayne County there are people from 141 different racial and ethnic groups—141 in one county in America. There are only 192 different national groups represented at the Olympics. Amazing. But you look at the rest of the world. Pick up the paper on any day, and you read about the Middle East or Bosnia or Northern Ireland or Rwanda or Burundi—all over the world, people literally torn apart by their differences. Why? Because there is something in human nature that makes people have to believe that they can only be important if they're looking down on someone else—"Well, whatever is wrong with me, at least I'm not them."

Now, we're trying to beat that rap. And that's why we cannot tolerate hatred or intolerance in this country. That's why America reacted so strongly against the horror of Oklahoma City. That's why America reacted so strongly against the church burnings and the desecration of syna-

gogues and Islamic centers in America. That's why—we know that. We know that.

And let me tell you, for all of the other issues I've talked about today, it is just as important for you to be able to say in your heart that you want to build a bridge to the 21st century big enough, wide enough, strong enough for everybody to walk across, and if someone stands up and says, "I believe in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence, and I'm willing to show up and do my job at work or as a student or in some other way tomorrow. I'm going to obey the law and be a responsible citizen," you need to be able to say back, "I need to know nothing else about you. You're part of my America. I will join hands with you, and we will walk into the 21st century together."

Thank you, Ohio. Thank you. God bless you. Be there with us next Tuesday.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. at St. John's Arena. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Ben Espy; Cynthia Ruccia, candidate for Ohio's 12th Congressional District; State Representative Charlita Tavares; and Franklin County recorder candidate Anthony Celebreeze, Jr.

Remarks at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania October 29, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Philadelphia. Can you hear us in the back? Beyond the fence? Thank you. Thank you for being here today. Thank you, Congressman Chaka Fattah, for your eloquent introduction. What's all that music? [Laughter] Whoever turned it off, give them a hand. That's great. There are a few thousand people out there beyond the fence. Can you hear us back there? Welcome. We're glad to see you.

Thank you, Congressman Chaka Fattah, for your leadership. Thank you, Mayor Rendell, for your outstanding leadership of Philadelphia. It's amazing what you've accomplished for all of America, as you said in your introduction. [Laughter] Congressman Borski, Congressman Foglietta. And I'd like to introduce a person that I hope will be joining them in the United

States Congress to fight for you and your future, Joe Hoeffel, a congressional candidate, very near here. Thank you, sir. Thank you, president of the Philadelphia City Council John Street. Thank you, my good friends Grover Washington, Patti LaBelle, Boyz 2 Men. Weren't they great?

Thank you, Rodney Peete, for what you said and what you do, and we all wish you well in your recovery. He's in a line of work where he even takes more blows than I do, and he's doing very well. [Laughter] And thank you, Holly, for being here. Thank you, Dr. Papadakis, and thank you, Dr. Judith Roden. Thank you, Chairman Brady, and thank you, Catherine Baker Knowles. And I understand that there are students here from 21 different colleges and universities throughout the Delaware Valley, thank you, all of you, for coming here today.